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EUROPEAN SPRING 2014

WALKABOUT GOURMET NEWSLETTER

Dear Walkabout Walkers and Friends,

Merhaba from Turkey! This year our walks in the Middle East, Asia and Europe started earlier than usual and it seems we have been galloping through the Spring season already. The close ending of our second tour in Turkey is certainly a strong reminder to put pen to paper and write our quarterly Newsletter.

DISCOVERING ASIA MINOR

We have finished our first "Discover Asia Minor" tour and what an overwhelming experience it was! Our journey started in Istanbul - a chaotic mixture of cultures, history and architecture. Our visit

to Gallipoli is one of a spiritual kind, thinking of all those who lost their lives in this now so peaceful countryside. Finding the name of her great-uncle made it especially moving for one of our guests from New Zealand.

Although the mention of "the ancient theatre" became a bit of a joke after a while, the ancient sites we visited were all amazing and so different from each other.

It would be hard to say which were the best but for me the most outstanding were Ephesus and Aphrodesias. Our picnic amongst the ruins in Hierapolis and the walk across the travertines were some highlights of our trip!

We had a delicious BBQ crab on our



river cruise to Turtle Beach, watching turtles popping their heads out of the water... only for seconds.



Another highlight was our cooking class with Nuray, a local lady in Minare. Together we prepared the - here so popular - cheese rolls, stuffed peppers and stuffed vine leaves (see last 2 pages)

Our free day in Kas was very welcome and although low key, our hotel was perfect for this day! Smiley's restaurant deserves a special mention as Mr and Mrs Smiley always have a smile on their face and the food was delicious! Great place to drink some raki, which is served with cheese and honey melon - a perfect ensemble!

Çiirali, one of my favourite places was

perfect for our last couple of days and came with a challenging walk up to the Musa Mountain!

Full moon and candlelit dinners in our friendly beach restaurant were superb and their breakfast truly the best!! Very happily we have decided to stay one night longer in 2015. We finished our tour in Antalya, a big sea resort in south-western Turkey!

AS HIGH AS A KITE, BUT IN A BALLOON

Our "Explore Cappadocia" tour started in Antalya and took us firstly to Konya, Turkey's holiest city. It was the home of Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi, who founded a mystic Sufi order, the so-called "Whirling Dervishes".

Here in Cappadocia with its fairy chimneys and cave houses we walked through spectacular landscapes and mysterious gorges. We admired the architecture of the thousands of pigeon houses carved into the soft tufa rock since ancient times, particularly visible in Pigeon Valley and ancient frescoed cave churches.

Another highlight here in Cappadocia was flying in a hot-air balloon above this incredible landscape. Also here we have been guests at a local home and experienced more of the Turkish hospitality and great food.

Together with 'Motter Hawva' (famous

local chef), we prepared recipes with fruits, vegetables and spices farmed in the home garden. See her stuffed Aubergines with minced meat, tomatoes and onions recipe - see last page.

Our local support

Fatih, our local guide here in Turkey is just a walking history book and he is never lost for answers when it comes to questions concerning every aspect of Turkey! He has the greatest sense of humour and is not afraid to "take the micky" out of himself at times. Without him it never would have been possible to work out these two great programs! He is a free-lance professional guide and works also for a Turkish tour operator.



Özkan, our faithful driver could take us all to the end of the world and he is a great support in all aspects of the organisation for this tour. He is calm and quiet, but plays a mean game of backgammon! He will be greatly missed when I soon have to do all the driving myself again!





Our enthusiasm about Turkey has continued to grow and we are working on a third program in Eastern Turkey and its borders, which will feature in our 2015 brochure! Please be patient - work is almost completed and you should receive it sometime in July!

THE PROMISED LAND

Our season started early this year - on the 2nd March - when Pascal and I were very excited to take our first group to Jordan and Israel after working out the itinerary some years ago.

We started in Aqaba and spent our first 4 days with Sabbah and his team in the



Wadi Rum Desert. Each day we went with our Bedouin guides - Ralhed or Amdan walking and exploring the desert. The Wadi Rum, also known as the Valley of the Moon, is a spectacularly scenic desert valley. It is quite isolated and largely inhospitable to settled life. The only permanent inhabitants are several thousand Bedouin nomads and villagers. Some of our highlights were certainly the Wadi Nuqra Gorge, Um Fruth Arch, Fig Canyon and the camel ride to our candlelit dinner in the desert.

Petra, the long-lost city of the Nabateans, a stunning ruin carved from solid red sandstone in the 3rd century BC was just overwhelming. This remote city is one of the great treasures of the ancient world (and one of the new Seven Wonders of the World). Its dazzling desert setting is unmatched and its elaborately carved temples, hewn into the red and golden sandstone cliffs by the mysterious Nabatean people 2,000 years ago, are simply spellbinding.

We walked through the narrow defile called the Siq and set our eyes on the breathtaking Al Khazneh (Treasury), which was featured in the film 'Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade'. We visited the Royal Tombs, climbed to the High Place of Sacrifice via the colourful ruins of the Wadi Farasa and walked on a hid-

den trail to the Monastery!

A true highlight was our candlelit dinner under the stars at little Petra, which was so carefully organised by Ilharia, our local contact person in Jordan - we even had a musician entertaining us!

Another highlight in Wadi Musa was our cooking class at Petra's Kitchen! Here we learned the art making such local favourites as Rice with Chicken (Kabsah Dijaj) - see recipe on the last 2 pages.

From Amman we travelled north and visited the fabulously preserved Roman ruins at Jerash, an archaeological masterpiece framed by the hills of Gilead. Jerash's monuments included a triumphal arch, stadium, huge fountain, temples and colonnaded streets.

We crossed the King Hussein-Allenby



Bridge, one of the three passages from Jordan into Israel and explored the treasures of Jerusalem from the times of King David to the Prophet Mohammed. Staying in the historic part of this fascinating city allowed us to experience its multiple moods and we discovered many mysterious alleyways and courtyards.

We started our walk through the historic city right at our hotel - also the first Station to the Cross - and followed the Via

Dolorosa, where Jesus carried his cross past the Stations of the Cross. Our walk ended at the West Wall and some of us might have even written their own personal prayer note to tuck into the wall.

Other highlights were the Mount of Olives, David's Tomb and Bethlehem! We discovered two great restaurants - the Armenian Taverna and the Eucalyptus Restaurant - both worth a visit if you should happen to travel to Jerusalem.

What better way to finish this tour than at the Kempinski Hotel at the Dead Sea with the largest spa in the Middle East! With the highest content of minerals and salts in the world, the Dead Sea water is thought to possess healing properties, and the mud on the shores has been used for therapeutic purposes for over 2,000 years.

We ended the tour in Amman, visiting



Mt Nebo, from where Moses glimpsed the Promised Land and Madaba, famous for its mosaics along the way.

Our local support

Pascal Briau, a professional guide has been working with us for 5 years. Initially he helped us to work out our program in Crete and Santorini, but over the last few years he has worked with us on other tours in Europe as well. He speaks Greek like a Greek and has lived more than 10 years in Crete himself. He is an enthusiast when it comes to Greek history and brings the - sometimes so boring - history lesson to life! He also has developed a great knowledge about Jordan.



Abid, our driver did a great job taking us safely to all the different places and never grew tired of passing on local knowledge! His speciality was "smelling" a good bakery in a 5 km radius! We were all very sad to see him drive off at the end!

SPAIN AND MOROCCO: A FABULOUS COMBINATION

Our first Moorish Trail was a great success and despite some long drives, everybody really enjoyed the many different impressions in the south of Andalusia and in Morocco. Here are some comments from some guests on this tour in April. In 2015 we have planned two tours for April and September and they are both fully booked at this point of time, but that of course can still change until April or September next year!

"First time with Walkabout and we are sure it will not be our last. A small group of only 5, which probably gave us a lot more flexibility than would be normal. We had a great time and with the walking to more remote areas and the obvious enthusiasm of Gilles saw and experienced a lot of things that would not have been available to an independent or coach tour traveller. Although a lot of travelling for Gilles, the combination of Andalusia and Morocco was fabulous and certainly made us feel we were doing as the tour stated-- Following the Moorish Trail. The accommodation and food were excellent. We don't think you should change anything on this program. Thank you Gilles for what was a fun time!"

BOB AND JEAN, NSW, AUSTRALIA

"An absolutely wonderful trip with a marvellous guide. A huge number of experiences packed into 3 weeks of travel. Excellent walking, great food and wonderful contrasts in accommodation from the rustic and immensely enjoyable Berber village, Tamerloute in the Valley of the





Roses to the luxury of the stunning Parador at the Alhambra in Granada. The local guides in Morocco were interesting and entertaining, the schedule very well planned and the walks were of a good level for a medium walker”

CATHY, KEW, VIC, AUSTRALIA

2014 TOURS VIDEO PREVIEW

You may have missed out on our five interstate Film and Information Evenings back in March, you can now see online the film prepared by Gilles Boivin and presented on the night. See photo and video page on the site.

NORWAY'S SPECIAL: 10% OFF

Due to a late cancellation we now have 4 spaces available with 10% discount on our summer Norwegian Walking holiday Peer Gynt's Trail. This 14-day tour departs Bergen on 12 July. Escape the crowds and heat of Southern Europe - Don't miss the opportunity to discover one of Europe's best kept secrets – experience the beauty of Norway's magical fjords, walk through 3 of Norway's most beautiful National Parks, stay in unique heritage accommodation & enjoy deliciously prepared dinners - experience for yourself that Norway's cuisine is anything but boring!

UPCOMING FOOD & WINE FESTIVALS

How about combining your 'active' holidays or weekend away with a gourmet adventure?

There are plenty of events in Australia from regional Food and Fine Wine Festivals to Gastronomy Expos throughout the year.

These Events bring together Australian and world-renowned winemakers, chefs and industry insiders to entertain, educate and inspire, you may also visit farm gates and cellar doors, meet with local producers, attend degustation dinners, taste regional products or even attend cooking classes!

We have put a list of local and overseas gourmet events together to encourage you to go walkabout and discover a new region.

What's coming near you in the next 3 months:

JUNE 14

- 06/06 QLD | Townsville Sensation Food & Wine Festival
- 07/06 VIC | Mornington Peninsula Winter Wine Weekend
- 12/06 Bordeaux, France | Les Epicuriales - Restaurant extravaganza
- 27/06 NSW | Sydney Good Food & Wine Show

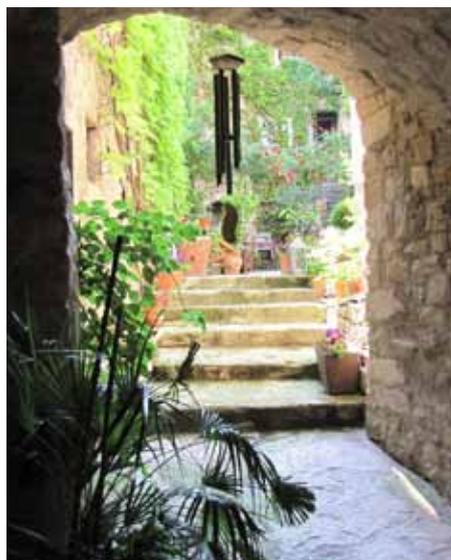


JULY 2014

- 09/07 Chicago, USA | Taste of Chicago Festival
- 11/07 Perth, WA | Perth Good Food & Wine Show

AUGUST 2014

- 02/08 SA | Kangaroo Island Food Safari
- 15/08 SA | Barossa Gourmet Weekend
- 29/08 NSW | Newcastle Food & Wine Expo



LIKE A LOCAL IN PROVENCE

It looks like another busy year with our holiday apartments in Forcalquier with guests coming from all over the world. Bookings for 2014 are very strong but we still have availability especially in August - so consider a short stay in Provence when planning your European holiday next year.

Happy and safe travelling – we look forward to welcoming you on one of our holidays soon.

Kind Regards,

Gabriela, Graeme and WGA Team



RECIPES FROM TURKEY

NURAY'S CHEESE ROLLS

Stuffed Wine Leaves

These delicious little parcels are not difficult to make and bear little resemblance in taste to the mass produced variety.

Stuffing

- 250 g long grain rice
- 6 onions (very finely chopped or grated),
- 1 tomato, skinned and finely chopped
- 3 tbsp pine nuts
- 2 tbsp currants, ½ bunch dill finely chopped
- ¼ bunch fresh mint chopped
- 1 tsp allspice, ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp sugar, salt, pepper
- 1 glass olive oil
- 1 glass hot water

Method

- Finely chop or grate onions (or use food processor); using large pan, heat olive oil, fry onions and pine nuts until lightly browned.
- Add rice, stir and cook for a few minutes; add tomatoes, currants, spices, sugar, water, salt and pepper; stir, cover and cook gently over low heat for about 20 minutes, until liquid is absorbed.
- Stir in mint and dill and leave to cool.
- Stuffed wine leaves (Yaprak Sarma)
- 500 g fresh vine leaves,
- ½ cup olive oil, lemon slices (enough to cover)
- Pinch of sugar

Method

- Wash well, place in plenty of boiling water for about 2-5 minutes.
- Quickly drain and plunge into cold water; remove stalks.
- Lay the leaves with glossy side down, veined side up and with the stem towards you.
- Place a teaspoon of stuffing near the stem and fold the leaf edges inward over the stuffing, then roll the leaf away from you to form the dolma, which should be finger-shaped and a firm little roll.
- When all ready, tear discarded leaves and line base of large pan.
- Place the dolma on the bed of leaves, with their edges downwards and next to each other and make a second layer if necessary.



- Pour on olive oil, hot water, sugar and arrange the lemon slices on top.
- Use heatproof plate as a weight cover, bring to boil, then cook gently for about 35 minutes; when tender, pour off any excess water and leave to cool, with lid on.
- Serve with lemon wedges.

MOTTER HAVVA AUBERGINES

Together with Motter Havva, we pre-



pared recipes with fruits, vegetables and spices farmed in the home garden.

Ingredients

- 6 long thin eggplants (around 1200g in total)
- 3 big tomatoes (up to 600g) peeled and diced
- 1 big onion sliced into semi-circles
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 3-4 cloves of garlic minced
- 1 green pepper finely diced
- 2 sugar cubes
- 1 handful parsley

Method

- Preheat the oven to 200°C and peel eggplants in stripes to create a “zebra” effect and leave them to soak in salty water for 20 minutes to get rid of the bitter taste.
- Remove from the water, rinse and make sure they are well dried.
- Pierce eggplants several times with a fork and place on a baking tray. Then brush eggplants with 2 tablespoons olive oil and bake for 30 minutes.
- While eggplants are in the oven, prepare the stuffing.
- Fry onion with 1 tablespoon olive oil, turn onions until golden in colour and add the green pepper, sugar cubes, tomatoes, garlic and salt.

- Cook for 10 minutes. Before turning off the heat, add finely sliced parsley and stir well.
- Remove eggplants from oven and place into an ovenproof dish.
- With a fork ease apart the white part of each eggplant and stuff with onion/tomato mixture.
- Pour any water remaining from stuffing over the stuffed eggplants and put the dish into a preheated oven and cook for 40 minutes. Delicious!!

RICE CHICKEN IN PETRA'S KICHEN

Another highlight in Wadi Musa was our



cooking class at Petra's Kitchen! Here we learned the art making such local favourites as Rice with Chicken (Kabsah Dijaj).

Ingredients

- 2 chicken quartered
- ½ kg carrots
- 4 medium tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tbsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp cardamom
- 7 cups hot water
- 1 cup garden peas
- 4 cups basmati rice
- 4 medium onions
- ¾ cup butter
- 1 tbsp cumin
- 1½ tbsp salt, nutmeg

Method

- Wash chicken quarters well.
- Rub with salt and wash again.
- Drain on paper towels.
- Finely chop the tomatoes and onions.
- Dice carrots.

- Heat butter and sauté onions for 2 minutes in a deep pot.
- Add chicken pieces and sauté for 5 minutes.
- Stir in hot water, tomatoes and tomato paste.
- Add salt, spices and cook for 30 minutes over medium heat.
- Wash the rice and mix with carrots and peas.
- Place on top of chicken and cover.
- Cook for 40 minutes.
- Place on serving platter and serve with side dishes like Arabic salad and yoghurt.

